## WORLD'S COMPLETE NOVELETTE. EVENING

By William Slavens McNutt

THE STORY OF A BASEBALL PITCHER WHO THOUGHT HE COULD ACT.

for a brief season in a vaudeville act.

RED MARTIN, the receiving end of the Gallagher battery and he balance wheel and safety valve of a friendly partnership.

MARSHALL KENDRICK, the "professional" factor in the vaudeville act.

LOUISE CLARE, on the stage from babyhood and never impressed by a man until she met Gallagher.

made pitching his heart out on the

and inquired: "How long has this

the theatre than he had been on the

all that, but he didn't understand. He

harmoniously into the strange new

They played on the bill with Louise

the theatre as a back drop or a bunch

been old-fashioned circus and song-

out of the hole and win; seen him

stand on them unaided.

PEED GALLAGHER won thir- "Laughed! Why wouldn't they ty-four games for the Gray laugh? Wouldn't you laugh if you Sox during the regular season, seen Ban Johnson in pink tights try-Then he pitched three straight ing to do a toe dance? Wouldn't you shut-outs in the World Series. After laugh if you seen John McGraw playneighbor with plenty of pre-war stuff, funny as either of them things." So the K. and L. people signed him up ently. "I guess you think I can't do your hand." nothin' but play baseball, huh?" for twenty weeks in vaudeville.

Speed inquired after affixing his anything else you're worth a dime a watched me act yet?" signature to the contract that called dozen." for more money a week than many HE critics in New York were college professors make in a year.

The theatrical manager looked at him and sighed. 'Let us worry about that, Speed," he suggested. "We'll burlesque praise, and he did not rest of it?" frame up something for you."

The theatrical manager then called He knew only that his name was up product of Broadway, who wrote plays conspicuous on the biliboards of the in much the same way that a tailor city; that at every performance he makes suits. You showed Danny an was cheered and cheered again; that ctor or some one who wanted to be he was getting more money for apan actor, and said: "Something to fit pearing on the stage for a few minthis, Danny; we want to start rehear- utes twice a day than he had ever sals to-morrow night."

Danny would nod, measure his cus. diamond. He felt like the man who tomer with a wise eye, and come on went to a horse race for the first time, the following night with something cashed his initial bet at ten to one, approximating a passable fit.

"I've signed up Speed Gallagher, been going on?" Panny." the theatrical manager said. Speed became convinced that he Danny nodded approval. "Good was a stage star, a greater success in business; he ought to draw."

"He ought to," the theatrical man- diamond. The fans flattered him, the ager agreed. "God knows, he won't actors toadied to him, the managers be able to do nothing else. Fix us up coddled him, and the critics kidded something for him, Danny. About him. There was only his old pal and twenty minutes; to close in one act." roommate, Red Martin, to tell him the "What can be do?" Danny asked. truth, and Speed paid no attention

"Pitch," the manager said briefly, to him. Red, he had decided, was all "I mean, has he got any stuff? Is right in his way; a good fellow and he a hoofer? Can be sing?"

"I don't know," the manager said was just a baseball player. He went without interest, "I suppose not. Bet- ground with Martin less and less as ter have a talk with him. I'll get time went on. Red didn't seem to fit Marshall Kendrick to carry him."

By that the manager meant that he life of which Gallagher felt himself would engage Marshall Kendrick, a so important a part. well known comedian, to amuse the audience and keep them from real- Clare for the first time in Chicago. ming that they had been stung when Louise was as completely a part of hey paid money to see Speed Gallagher do anything but play baseball. light. Her father and mother had ceive about one-fifth the salary paid the pitcher.

HE act opened at Atlantic City. In it were Speed, his her entrance on her own feet within morrow." Marshall Kendrick.

"Just do your stuff, kid," Martin advised Speed reassuringly as they audience in the hollow of her pink lit- She made a little grimace. "Oh, fore the curtain went up. "Never will, as a sculptor fashions clay. She for a living," she said lightly. mind this hoofin' and singin' they've could and did do most of the things "Oh, sure!" said Speed, vaguely

The act went with a whoop. For- theatrical heap on the strength of "Oh-Johns!" she exclaimed scorntunately Speed's hoofing and singing either her singing or her dancing, fully. "Sure! They're always miring fans rocked in their chairs made her thrifty to the point of Home and to bed for mine." verite trying to make his feet and a wise, wholesome, heart-hungry lit- he said.

they struck the set and Speed on the own in the profession must fight, and "Didn't I?" he muttered. bare stage took a baseball in his big who nursed a pathetically intense thought I did." and began burning over curves longing for the peace of happy marand shoots to Red Martin, the roars riage, with love to stand guard. of applause that answered his efforts She fell for Speed Gallagher; fell you wouldn't if I did, would you?" had nothing of ridicule in them. While quick and hard. She was tired of "Sure I would if you did; but you can't I?" the audience clapped and shouted ap- smooth, flat, little dancing men; haven't." proval of his illustrations of how to pompous, strutting actors, and posing Speed grinned, "Well, will you?" keep on like this and you're goin' to little intercity league of his in Me pitch three straight shut-outs in the acrobats. Speed attracted her be- he blurted. World Series, stumpy little bow- cause he was rough and awkward, "You bet I will," she agreed spring training." Martin, crouching low, bashful, deferential. To her he was heartily, "Let's go" thumped his big mitt and shouted his a man from a far country; a chamcustomary chant of encouragement. pion in a strange and thrilling game.

"Do your stuff, kid! Atta boy! Do She had watched him on the diayour stuff!"

When Speed reached his dressing cap pulled cockily over one eye, windroom, after taking enough bows to ing himself slowly into an intricate suit a tenor, he was flushed with knot on the mound and uncoiling sudtriumph. "I guess I didn't do so bad, denly like a released steel spring to huh?" he crowed to Red Martin. smoke the ball past the bewildered

"Well, your fast one wasn't breakin' batter and stand erect, grinning, his so well," Martin demurred.

"I don't mean my pitchin'," Speed seen him in tight spots, cool, unburgether, eh? You and me? explained. "My other stuff."

What other stuff?" Red snorted, hostile thousands shricked and howled up baseball," she protested. "Why, you big, overgrown, goggly- in a futile attempt to disturb his eyed sap, you ain't got no other stuff, triumphant poise; seen him pitch his play basebali." You don't think your hoofin' and way slowly, methodically, brilliantly singin' was any good, do you?"

paper flowers, fake fights, blank cart- a wonderful baseball player." ridges, brilliant sunshine and soft "Well, of course, I did at first," he claimed. "You been holdin' some- "All right? You go ahead and jump, you?" won with the harsh implements of ingly, "You're going all right, Speed. reality.

TACK REILLY, the house man- "But what?" he demanded trucuager in Chicago, introduced lently. them after the show on the "Well, Speed, you're a baseball second night.

and as widely known as the President. "Is that so?" Speed retorted belliger- certainly did have them eating out of enough to do an act with you," he

"Aw, that was nothin' much," "What kind of stuff do I get to do?" "Nothin' but," Red agreed. "At Gallagher mumbled, "Have you

> in the wings when they strike the set too subtle for the suddenly and you start to pitch," she said.

She admitted that she had not. realize that they were kidding him.

"I'd like to have you watch it some in Danny Fliesher, a clever young in electric lights on Broadway and night," Speed said. "I'd like to have

but"-

"I saw you in all of the games is your stuff, just the same as acting makes."

WHO'S WHO IN THE STORY.

She was a creature of the sham

SPEED GALLAGHER, baseball pitcher extraordinary, signed up

That was his on the ball field.

She was a creature of the sham

SPEED GALLAGHER, baseball pitcher extraordinary, signed up

The speed Gallagher of the sham was a job for Speed Gallagher. The speed Gallagher of the previous night.

Well, holy, high, jumping because you're such

The speed Gallagher of the sham was a job for Speed Gallagher. The speed Gallagher of the sham and was nabled by a burly cop. had wasted his boyhood pitching and your pals and the fans and every—the speed Gallagher. The speed Gallagher of the shall baseball at a knothole in a fence bely else—to go jump in the ocean, and was nabled by a burly cop. The speed Gallagher. The speed Gallagher of the shall baseball at a knothole in a fence bely else—to go jump in the ocean, and was nabled by a burly cop. The speed Gallagher. The speed Gallagher of the shall be s Jehoshaphat!" Martin ex- eh?

Red confronted him, his feet spread can take it or leave it!"

moonlight that came out of a machine. To her he was a citizen of the world of reality; a conqueror whose power was daily tried, tested and proved; a conqueror who fought and proved; a conqueror whose daily tried, the proved; a conqueror whose daily tr moonlight that came out of a ma- admitted reluctantly. "Since I've thing out on me all these years, kid. But I'm telling you this: You'll land One of the nicest little girls in the Instead of being a dirty faced little world ralls for you you big farmer kid, you'll be a good for nothin' no and before you'd kissed her twice you account, bulkin' old tramp, moochin' english out of the door, colling high You got all the stuff in the world to started figurin' on living easy off her quarters around pool rooms and try-big reputation. You were goin' to ing to get nice clerks to listen to you quit work and go kitin' around the while you tell 'em how good you was "Well, Speed, you're a baseball country doin' nothing and dragging once. You an actor! Why, say, if lighted show window of a hardware player; you're not an actor. Baseball down half of the big dough that she you had one bad year in the big store, cowering away from the heat. league-if your arm went back on you that he was more popular than a in' Hamlet? Well, you was just as you pitched during the series last is mine. You've got to do your stuff." "Where do you get that stuff?" for one season—you couldn't get a fall, Mr. Gallagher," she said. "You "Maybe you think I ain't good tation's as big as hers, ain't it?" eledeon! That's the truth and you agony of herror flooded through him.

curling out of the door, coiling high across the street and stood before the do your stuff! Do your stuff!" screaming with excitement and point-

High up on the otherwise blank brick wall, just under the peak of the stage roof, there was a window, about a foot and a half square. Framed in the window was Louise Clare. Her the glare from the flames below. "Do something!" Red Martin

shouted frantically, beating his fists can we do? Nobody can get in there! hell. Man, we got to do something!" Speed acted with a celerity that And Speed egitimatized his name. With a side again, nerve-rackingly deliberate; af sweep of his arm he smashed the sure as a bit of perfect machiners the falling fragments of glass. He klicked the jarged pieces left in the frame out of his way and stepped into show window. From the hooks on which they were displayed he yanked

With these he jumped back to the He raised his head and cupped his palms about his mouth. 'Louise! Don't jump!" he bellowed. "Don't jump!"

tion: "Rooms for Rent."

man throwing clothes into a trunk. "The roof!" Speed shouted. "Which of apprehension, for leaping tonging is way to the roof?"

fire yet I can'

Speed grabbed him by the throat

ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE. THE "Which way to the roof? You gab-FLAMES LEAPED SUDDENLY bling idiot, tell me the way to the roof, slipping helplessly toward roof, or I'll tear your head off you." the pavement below; felt himself be

Speed tore through the opening, as he was pitching over the edge aped up a narrow ladder-like flight of stairs, threw open the trap, and scrambled out on the flat roof. He hung face downward, clinging desperrushed to the edge of the roof and ately to the dangling girl, he heare looked across. The little square win- above him the grunted shout: "I dow in the back wall of the theatre you, kid! Atta boy! Steady with it was almost on a level with him. Louise Clare was still standing there, stuff, old kid!"

It took five stage hands and the "Don't jump!" Speed bellowed at the top of his lungs. you hear me? Here! 'I'll work the street on the roof! Don't jump!" The girl in the tiny window high up above the growing flames heard and

waved her answer to him.

Speed threw off his overcoat and took one of the baseballs from his pocket. He flipped out his jackknife, opened it and made two slashes in the tough, horsehide cover of the ball about an inch and a half long to do straight singin' and dancin' from and a half inch apart. With a point of the knife blade he threaded an end the stout twine, looted from the hardware store window below, under the half inch strip of cover between

> the ball in his hand, he rose and shouted to the girl.

ture was empty. Speed stood an act together, you and L." of a released steel spring and, the ball my stuff, an' I'll go with you in the inch to the right of the opening, peated solemnly. He felt carefully struck and fell to the street below! Speed Gallagher had missed. He had ing missed, and for the first time in his thought for a minute up there on by

"Oh, my God! What's the matter Pretty good stuff at that." thought you'd want to know. They with me?" he prayed. "Good God! Red, I can't make it." He was frantically haufing it on the string. "You cushed out. He was thinking of his try it, Red!' he begged, "My arm's "Do your stoff!" Red whish

It was no job for Red Martin, and

this week. Let me through, will the diamond stood Red Martin in good a stead; the habit of the veteran catchents

Speed rushed around to the back of encouragingly. "This one's easy, kid"

And under the effect of the familia flow of encouraging chatter from his Speed Gallaghal mate. steadied as he had steadied many vi time before in a bad spot; steadied and tightened; grew calm and ded liberate and menacing as he drew the ball up over the edge of the roof. 3:100 Once more he stood erect, hitches "

up his trousers and twitched his enp Beside him Red Martin stood, squatos ting in the catcher's position, sparile face and head were clearly seen in ing his left paim with his right fistion chanting his slangy line of encourage "Atta boy, old kid! You could be

"Good God, Speed, what shave a guy with that fast one teams day and never leave a bruise. Right \* That whole lower part's just a roaring in the old spot, Speed! Come on! Description And Speed Gallagher, himself office

phate ghas window of the hardware store, jumping quickly back to escape straight, true as a bullet from the falling fragments of close the straight, true as a bullet from the straight. marksman's gun, through the finy window. The girl's head appeared in this

aperture once more "Pull!" down a ball of stout brown twine and her. "Pull on that string; there's Speed bellowed across Ti rope tied to it. The the rope to on of them girders in there. Pull!'

HE girl began to draw on this string. Speed knelt and quickle knotted it to an end of theah GLASS transom over a woodmanila rope. en door next to the hard. The girl rapidly pulled the rop-

ware store bore the inscrip- across the intervening space, draw I through the window and secured t Speed spied the door. It was locked, about a girder. Red Martin newsay He backed off several paces, hunched Speed Gallagher braced themselver 3 his right shoulder high against his and drew it taut. Louise crawled on head, and plunged into it. The door through the window and surrenders, splintered and crashed inward. Fol. herself to the line, making swift works? lowed by Red Martin, Speed dashed of crossing hand over hand. As show into the hallway and up the stairs. On neared the roof on the opposite aid the third floor he ran into a bewildered and safety, the flames leaped sudden high along the brick wall of My theatre. Speed groaned in an agen at

of fire along the wall were lighted a "It ain't on fire yet, is it?" The man dangerously near the rope. chattered affrightedly. "This house leasing the line, lay flat on the resting ain't on fire yet? I got most of my leaning over as far as he dared, reach things packed now, and if it ain't on ing his arms toward the gurl senses shouting to her to hurry. He had omes and slapped his face with his open the rope burned through and parted so of her wrists in both his hands wherea

"The roof!" he shouted again. him he felt himself being drawn osals. bit and held like from bands. As to Hang on, Help's comin'. Do you'

> A moment later Speed felt otherwa "Louise! Do firm hands on his legs; heard other Across the voices on the roof. Slowly, careful he was drawn back to safety. blood was pumping hard in his As they drew him up over the editions of the roof consciousness deserted him but the will to save the endangered me efforts of two men to pry his locker fingers loose from her wrist.

THEN Speed came to he wante lying on a bed in one of the rooms below. Louise Clarast was sponging his foreheaden He sat up grinning weakly "I must of passed out," he muttered apologetically. "What a crazy thins to do?

Louise Clare was on her kness the "Get back!" he roared, motioning fore him holding his big right handstant of the promise he had made to the te her. "Get back! One side! Look! hers. She was weeping happily. "Oh of Speed!" she cried. "I'm so sorry is was mean to you. I didn't mean it HE girl understood and with speed. Honest! You just go righter drew. The small square aper- ahead and quit baseball and we'll dre erect on the roof, hitched up Speed patted her shoulder attens his breeches in a manner familiar to shook his head. "Not for mine!" talk him when he was in a tough spot on said firmly. "Raseball's my stuff, and wound up. He uncoiled with the snap with me in the summer while I show

> "Oh, Speed! "Baseball's my stuff," Speed re his right arm, flexing and straighten: "? experimentally. career panic seized him. He fell to rouf the old wing had gone back at me. But I guess it's all right. Feek better to-day. Baseball's my stud

He took Louise Clare's upturned erently forward to kiss her. Red Mar.

"Do your stuff!" Red whispered to

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the stage in a baby carriage when Seems to be going pretty well." "I'll watch it at the matince to-

catcher, Red Martin, and a year of the time she was able to "Wish you would. I've seen you on the stage lots of times. Gosh! You At twenty-two she could take an certainly can sing and dance."

stood shivering in the wings just be- tie palm and mould its mood to her well, we've all got to do something

rung in on you. You just stall that are done on a vaudeville stage, grinning. He shuffled his big feet through that any old how, and then. The main feature of her act was her and blushed. "I-I suppose there's a when you come to burnin' 'em across work on the tight rope, but she was jot of guys askin' you out to dinner to me, just do your stuff! That's all. also a comedienne of sorts and could after the show and such like as that, Just do your stuff and we'll get by." even have stayed at the top of the ain't there?"

were so bad that the audience of ad- Intimate acquaintance with life had around. Lots of good it does them. and laughed until the tears came at miserliness with her money, her Gallagher nodded and gulped. "I

tie soldier, who knew all the ways "Go out with you? Man, you didn't When, near the close of the act, of the warfare that a girl on her ask me to go out with you!"

> "No." she said. "you didn't." Speed shuffled and wriggled. "Well, you were one sloppy sight to see."

TITHIN three weeks after Gallagher proposed and mond, tall and slouchily confident, his was accepted. The engagement was brief and stormy. It had scarcely had time wrong! to begin, in fact, before Gallagher

good now and we'll do an act tothumbs hooked into his belt. She had ried, down there on the field, while

"Oh, but Speed, you mustn't give "Why not? Any roughneck can

"But, Speed! That's your game!" "Well, actin's my masur, too, ain't "They seemed to like it," Speed pitch also brilliantly, methodically, it?" he said resentfully. "I'm gettin' mitted grudgingly grumbled. "They laughed when I and loss without disturbance of the more money for actin' than I ever was something. calm, dominant, masterful attitude got for playin' baseball. Will post team clean. What's it all about?"

suggested sullenly.

your team, would you?"

and final. Speed sought relief from Your dad was a blacksmith down his mood in hard liquor, and Red Marinto shape for the matinee performin the dressing room.

sight of their gangly, raw-boned fas health and her friendship. She was don't suppose you'd go out with me," manded. "This actin' thing gone to nobody in that little neck o' the woods. drunk before."

"Well, you seen me drunk last night, didn't you?"

"Well, I can get drunk if I want to,

be in fine shape when you show up for

for spring trainin'?" Red stared. "You ain't had a row

starting west from Chicago with the club, have you?"

Red showed real concern. "What's

"Aw, what's the use of tellin' you" Speed flamed. "You're like all the You think all I can d "I'll cut out this baseball stuff for is just play baseball. I'm goin' to show you guys, the whole bunch you! I'm goin' to keep on actin that's what I'm goin' to do; an' make birds, too. I'm goin' to show all guys, an' Louise Clare, to that"

Louise Clare," Martin exclaimes "What's she got to do with "Well, we had a fight," Speed ad

Martin nodded. "I thought to

apart, his hands on his hips. "Well, Speed, you wouldn't think I you big blob of home-grown choese was good enough to play baseball on you listen to me. I want to tell you house manager to pry the two apart. dragged him away. ball, you wouldn't have had no more The quarrel that followed was bitter reputation than a second hand car body else to little hick burg in Tennessee that Callugher roard "You show up tonever had enough boobs in it at o night and I'll knock your block off. tin had his work cut out for him the time to even get its name on the map. And they ain't goin' to be nobody else next day to get the big pitcher solered You were a burn, that's all. Just cither. I'll show you guys. That about baseball, you might of worker ance. After the show Red berated him hard, and some day got to be worth hear me! Me and Kendrick is goin' \$40 a month as a farm hand, but you "What the devil alls you?" he de- were a nut about baseball and so you weren't worth even \$40 a month to your head? In all the time I've been Oh, your dad told me all about you roomin' with you I never saw you when he was visitin' you in Cincinnati hast summer.

wouldn't work. All you'd do was play baseball when you had anybody to "I sure did! And I'll tell the world play with, and when you didn't you'll go off and practice throwing at a knot hole in the fence. They were just fiin' to send you to reform school when Barney Mercer happened to see you. "You proved that all right! You and give you a job pitching for the chanicatown. Now you're a star You got a fancy car of your own and more money than you know how to count "Who said I was goin' to show up And you got a reputation. Yell! There nin't a man, woman or child in th United States who don't know who Speed Gallagher is. They follow you club, but I'm off of baseball. I'm stare at you in the hotels. So man people know you that you can get bis dough just for coming out on the stage and making a big fool of your

"And why do they know you? It's cause you were such an ornery little worthless nut when you were that you wouldn't do nothin' but pe laseball; because you grew up never been able to think of nothing but baseball; because all the good that's spread here and there in the men is all boiled down to be ense in you. You know more terseball than any man living less about anything else. neked you up out of nowhere mety faced, little country kid, and you clean up on top of the hear

now on and you watch how we go. You just watch! T TEN O'CLOCK that night Speed Gallagher left his the two slits and knotted it. Rapidly dressing room on his way to he dressing room on his way to be uncolled a considerable length of his hotel. He was halfway the twine so it would run free. With down the first flight of stairs that led to the stage when he thought manager of the hotel to autograph The ball! See? Through the winand give him three baseballs for his dow; get back!" three hero-worshiping young sons. He returned to his dressing room,

"You're a darned har," said Speed.

suddenly white, "you ain't the man to

'I'm through!" Red panted as they

You won't work no week out!"

aseball part's out of this act. You

tell me so and get away with it!"

said Martin, his face

As he stepped out the stage door he in standing in the alloy. The two old friends did not speak

his overcoat and went his way.

Think I can do nothin' but play baseup to Speed Gallagher's room. "The theatre's on fire, Mr. Gallagher," he said excitedly. "I

say she's just blazing away." Speed threw on his overcoat and

took three bandalla from his trunk, dropped them into the side pocket of could hear Louise Clare singing a the diamond, twitched his cap, and that's what I got to do. You come Speed was heartsone but stubborn, with the brown twine tied to it flashed winter while you do your stuff, huh?" "I'll show 'em," he muttered to him- across and struck the brick wall an if as he trudged along to his hotel.

trunk and challes hanging in the gone, something's the matter with my himself, grinning. "Atta boy, kid! Deeye! I can't do it; you try it."

The street was load with the rum- Red Martin knew it. He could peg to ble, and clang of fice apparatus; second with the next one, but to hit you're up there, you're going to tell choked with a noisy and curious that tiny window across the street Newspaper Service, New York.